

ROUNDISH RATHER THAN ROUND:
ΕΠΙΣΤΡΟΓΓΥΛΟΣ
IN DIOGENES OF OENOANDA AND ARISTOTLE

Diogenes of Oenoanda New Fragment 9, discovered by me in 1970, deals with the problem of why square towers viewed from the distance appear round – a problem much discussed by the Epicureans and their opponents (1).

Since its first publication in 1971 (2), the fragment, which consists of two incomplete fourteen-line columns (the left part of col. I and the right part of col. II are missing), has been re-edited by Hoffman (3), Barigazzi (4), and Casanova (5). My attempted reconstruction of the whole fragment, much assisted by the efforts of these scholars, will appear, with a full apparatus criticus, in my forthcoming edition of Diogenes' inscription. Here I am concerned only with one point of particular interest in col. II.9-10, but I give the text (without apparatus criticus) and translation of col. II, starting in the middle of line 1, where a new sentence begins:

[τύπους]
 γοῦν ἐπιμ[ένων τετρα]-
 γώνους κ[ατηγορεῖ τις ἐ]-
 πὶ διαβολῇ [τῶν ὄψε]-
 5 ων φερου[σῶν οὐχ ὥς τε]-
 τραγώνο[υς τύπους τοὺς]
 καθ' ὑπόσ[τασιν φερο]-
 μένους δ[ιὰ τοῦ ἀέρος]
 ἡμεῖν ὥς [ἐπιστρογγύ]-
 10 λους. ἐκεῖ [γὰρ οὐκ οἶδεν],
 ὥς εἰκός, [τὰ εἶδωλα ἀπο]-
 ρέοντα ἐκ τοῦ πύργου]
 ψωχόμε[να τῷ ἀέρι, ἀλλὰ]
 εὖ ὁρᾷ ὅσ[τερον - - - -]

(1) See e.g. Lucr. 3.353-363; Usener, *Epicurea* fr. 247 (Sext. Emp. Adv. Math. 7.208-209), 252 (Plut. Mor. 1121a-e).

(2) M. F. Smith, "AJA" 75, 1971, 371-373.

(3) G. N. Hoffman, *Diogenes of Oenoanda: A Commentary*, Dissertation, University of Minnesota 1976, 103-104, 308-310.

(4) A. Barigazzi, "Prometheus" 3, 1977, 13-15.

(5) A. Casanova, *I frammenti di Diogene d'Enoanda*, Firenze 1984, 305-307 (fr. 70).

[Since he is awaiting square impressions, a man] falsely [accuses the eyes when they convey in non-square form impressions which] in reality [are borne] to us [through the air] in a [roundish] form. [For] in that case [he does not know], presumably, [that the images] emanating [from the tower] are abraded [by the air, but afterwards] he sees well [that it is not the eyes which are at fault, but the mind...] (6).

In 9-10 Barigazzi suggests [στρογγύ]ιλους (7), but my [ἐπιστρογγύ]ιλους not only gives the line a more normal length, but also derives strong support from the parallel passage in Lucretius, where the point is made that square towers viewed from the distance as rounded do not look exactly like things which are really round, but bear a shadowy resemblance to them:

*hoc ubi suffugit sensum simul angulus omnis,
fit quasi ut ad tornum saxorum structa terantur - (8)
non tamen ut coram quae sunt vereque rotunda,
sed quasi adumbratim paulum simulata videntur. (4.360-363)*

It may be regarded as almost certain that Epicurus himself made the same point, and it may well be that he used the term ἐπιστρόγγυλος.

Although the verb ἐπιστρογγύλλω is found in Nicander, *Ther.* 514 (9), ἐπιστρόγγυλος, according to LSJ, occurs only as a "falsa lectio" in Aristotle, *HA* 555a30 (10), where it is described how spiders reproduce themselves. The generally accepted text is:

Τὰ δ' ἀράχνια ὀχεύεται μὲν πάντα τὸν εἰρημένον τρόπον, γεννᾷ δὲ σκωλήκια μικρὰ πρῶτον· ὅλα γὰρ μεταβάλλοντα γίνεσθαι ἀράχνια, καὶ οὐκ ἐκ μέρους, ἐπεὶ στρογγύλα ἐστὶ κατ' ἀρχάς· ὅταν δὲ τέκη, ἐπφάζει τε καὶ ἐν τρισὶν ἡμέραις διαρθροῦται.

ἐπεὶ στρογγύλα is the reading of A^a and C^a, while P and D^a have ἐπιστρόγγυλα δὲ. In preferring ἐπεὶ στρογγύλα, editors have probably been influenced partly by the belief – a belief by no means always justified –

(6) The last words in square brackets summarise the point which Diogenes is likely to have gone on to make. Cf. *Lucr.* 4.462-468.

(7) Diogenes' spelling would be στρογγύλους.

(8) Munro's suggestion for *tuantur* (*tuentur* L) of the manuscripts. The same scholar made another attractive proposal, *rotentur*, for which compare Petron. fr. 29.1-4 *fallunt nos oculi, vagique sensus / oppressa ratione mentiuntur. / Nam turris, prope quae quadrata surgit, / detritis procul angulis rotatur.*

(9) ῥίζα δὲ θηλυτέρης μὲν ἐπιστρογγύλλεται ὄγκῳ (with reference to the plant birthwort).

(10) A computer in the Bodleian Library, Oxford, kindly operated for me by Dr. D. P. Fowler, made a search of Greek literature in a matter of minutes and found no other occurrence of ἐπιστρόγγυλος.

that A^a and C^a are more reliable than P and D^a, partly by the absence of any other occurrence of ἐπιστρόγγυλος. My own view is that the reading of P and D^a is preferable. Three points can now be made in support of it.

First, while ἐπιστρόγγυλα δὲ gives completely acceptable sense, it is hard to see how ἐπεὶ is appropriate, and it is perhaps indicative of its inappropriateness that the Loeb editor (11), while retaining it in his text, offers "although" in his translation.

Secondly, ἐπιστρόγγυλα is much more likely, in view of its non-occurrence elsewhere, to have been corrupted to ἐπεὶ στρογγύλα than to be a corruption of it.

Thirdly, the almost certain occurrence of ἐπιστρόγγυλος in Diogenes of Oenoanda strengthens the case for admitting it in the Aristotelian passage.

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(11) A. L. Peck, *Aristotle, Historia Animalium*, vol. II, London and Cambridge Mass. 1970.